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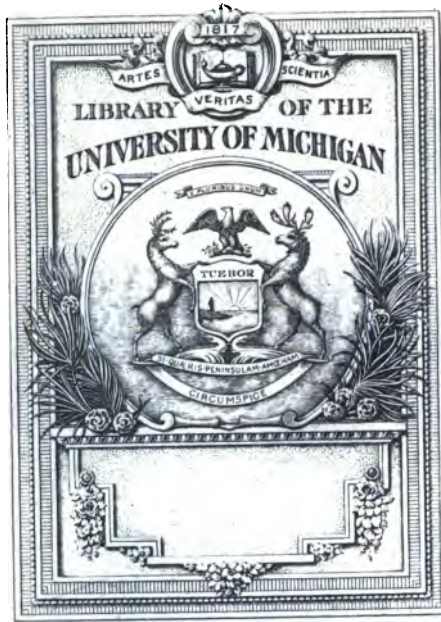
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CHRISTIANITY AND THE STATE UNIVERSITY

A SERMON DELIVERED AT THE
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH, MADISON, WIS.

By EUGENE GROVER UPDIKE, D. D.

MADISON, WIS.
TRACY, GIBBS & CO., PRINTERS
1894

At a meeting of the cabinet of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations of the University of Wisconsin, held September 19, 1894, a motion was passed requesting Rev. E. G. Updike, D. D., of Madison, Wis., to furnish the Christian Associations the MS. of his address, "Christianity and the State University." He kindly consented; and through the generosity of friends of the university this address is published in the hope that the church of Christ may be strengthened and built up in all of our state universities.

C. H. KÜMMEL, *Pres. Y. M. C. A.*

HELEN RICHARDSON, *Pres. Y. W. C. A.*

JOHN M. BEFFEL, *Gen'l Sec'y.*

Christianity and the State University.

Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's. Matt. 22:21.

We are closely related to two great institutions which cover practically the same territory, touch each other at a thousand points, and yet are not and cannot be organically connected. We have decided in this country that the church and the state must each do its work in its own way. One head and one set of laws cannot answer for both. The legislature cannot make a creed, and the church cannot enact laws for all the people. Yet the church, if it be true to its mission, is profoundly interested in the welfare of the state, and the state if it be patriotic and public spirited will be profoundly interested in the success of the church. Each, when ideal, is of the people, by the people and for the people. There is no reason for antagonism of any kind.

The state differs from the church in this particular—that it is an institution into which we are all born, and with which in some form we must be identified whether we will or not.

No one is compelled to be a member of the church. He may join any one of the different organizations or none at all, but he must be of the state. The state seems to be as truly a part of the divine plan as the church.

In the very early life of man the two are identical, and the government is a theocracy. But when for practical purposes church and state separate, it does not mean that the church carries with it all the divinity and leaves the state purely a secular institution.

The distinction sacred and secular, in most instances is a pernicious one. The whole of a man's life is to be sacred, not the Sunday or prayer meeting part of it alone, but the business and social and political part of it as well.

The whole of society is to be sacred, not the little part of it touched by this church or that, or by all of them together, but every interest of society is to be redeemed.

The state may not be able to teach any specific form of religion, but that does not mean that it is not to be religious. The state may not be able to engage in the practice of medicine, but that does not mean that doctors are not to look after the health of all the people who live in the state.

Men differ theologically as they do politically, but it would not in this age be practical to fix a creed by a vote of all the people. We can send the tariff up or down by a majority vote, but we cannot decide the doctrine of election or inspiration in that way.

It seems best to make the church a purely voluntary matter. Men are permitted to organize any kind of church they please. They may have any kind of belief. They may adopt any kind of polity. That too many churches are organized and too much money spent in mere rivalry, no one can doubt. That men are kept apart by non-essentials more than they are drawn together by essentials no one can doubt. But it is best that all should be permitted in their own way to express their religious life, and they may make this religion as essential a part of the state, as if church and state were organically related.

The functions of the church have been constantly enlarging. In like manner the functions of the state have been enlarging. One of the most vital questions at the present time is, how far shall the functions of the state be extended?

It seems very generally admitted that the state has a great work to do in education. Its safety depends upon an intelligent citizenship. There was never a wiser provision than when public schools were established and made dependent upon a tax levied on the property of all the people. The rich man must help to educate the poor man's sons.

But the rich man is protecting his own interests by such means, and had vastly better spend some money for the dif-

fusion of intelligence, than a good deal more for police regulations.

The state has come to feel that it has an important work, even in higher education, and so every where it is establishing its great universities and supporting them by a public tax. It thus becomes possible for the poorest young men and women of the state to avail themselves of the best training.

The right of the state to engage in this work has been questioned. It has been said that the state has no more right to give a man the higher culture than it has to set him up in business or give him a farm. But if a great university covers the whole field of investigation, if it gives to the farmer and business man as valuable a training in their departments as it does to the lawyer or the doctor or the man of letters, why has it not this right?

This question is no longer a debatable one. No one can afford to argue with a man who will question the right of the state to do what Wisconsin is doing for the people through its great university.

But the church has considered a very important part of its work to be educational. No one will question the wonderful things that have been accomplished. The men who founded this nation evidently believed that it was the function of the church to care for the higher education; and hence the first great institutions were of this character. It was, however, the practice in an early day to grant state aid to church schools. Harvard College has had assistance of this kind. The feeling has grown in some quarters all through the years that the higher education must be carried on wholly by the church or at least that it must be sustained by privately endowed institutions.

The church has attempted to care for the higher culture of its own, because it has been made to feel that it was not safe to leave so important a matter to outside agencies. It has said that we must educate the whole man. It is not enough to educate the brain and the hand. All this may be done, and

your man may go out only to be an accomplished villain. It is a better manhood that education must result in or it will be worse than a failure. It has been said by the church that the state cannot be intrusted to care for the higher culture. The state is political. The politician is not above using the sacred interests of education to further his ends. He cannot be intrusted even to select the teachers who are to train the young. Then it is said the state cannot be religious in the sense of teaching specific beliefs. It must confine itself largely to the intellectual side of culture, leaving at least one-third of the man untouched, and that too just at the critical point of his life, when he is coming to have definite views on all great questions.

It is not difficult to see how such views have been entertained. I must confess that I have shared them myself. But when one sees the real work that a great state university is doing, and when he considers the larger work that it may do if only it has the cooperation and sympathy of the church, the whole question presents a different aspect. A great state university that has a large body of influential and enthusiastic alumni will not be dominated by politicians. Indeed the politicians will find it their best policy to promote the higher interests of the institution.

That Christian men through the church have done heroic work in education no one is disposed to question; that they have been leaders in this most important work of giving character to the whole state before it began its career as an educator no one will question. Nothing must stand in the way of this work. But it is coming to be more and more a serious question with all church schools not well endowed, as to how they can be supported and made to compete with institutions that have back of them the property of a whole commonwealth. It takes a great deal of money to-day to thoroughly equip a great university. Ten millions of dollars is scarcely too much. Our own university has what is equal

to an investment of seven millions of dollars, and it has but commenced its career.

Now the simple question is, what can the church do in competition with such an equipment? This money can hire the best teachers and put in the best appliances in the world, and this is certainly a great factor.

There are schools in the state with fair buildings with one or two hundred thousand dollars endowment, attempting to do the same work that the university does with its millions. They may say we have what the state cannot give and what money cannot buy. They may say as Garfield did, that Mark Hopkins at one end of a log and a student at the other is a college, and that millions do not count, but this will hardly answer for argument with bright young men. Educated men are saying everywhere, "I received more from the students during my college days than I did from teachers or text-books." The whole intellectual life of an institution must be considered.

But the practical question comes back, what will the church do with her poorly sustained colleges in competition with such institutions? The constant appeal to individuals to assist in such work, has caused the work to be looked upon as a great burden. Every member of the church is also a citizen. He must do his part in sustaining the educational work of the state, and then he must help in his own church school, and the burden is too great. Colleges of the weaker class must look for endowments from rich men, and it will require a great many rich men to build up those smaller schools so that they can in any sense take rank with the university.

And there is no demand for so many schools at the present time. There would be some ground of justification if several denominations could unite their forces on the basis of building up one distinctively Christian institution. But a combination of all the church schools in the state would not equal one-half of what the state has invested in its university.

With such a condition of things as now exists, the educa-

tional forces of the church have little or no interest in the state university. In some instances there has been positive antagonism. Some Christian educators have drawn as far away from the university as possible, and then have caused the report to go out that the university is unchristian.

Now what should be the relations of the church to the institutions of the state? Is the church to build up corresponding institutions within itself, and draw away from the state and call it infidel? Or is the church to project as much of its life as possible into the state, and make it what it should be?

There are occasions when the church for the time being must lose itself in order that it may find itself again in the larger relations of life, in the home, in politics, in the industrial world, in the work of higher education.

I am very free to say that I believe in the education of the whole man. I believe in the culture of the heart as well as that of the brain and of the hand. And now there seems but one reasonable thing to do, and that is for the church to supplement the work of the state, and make itself felt as largely as possible at every educational center under state control.

We profess to believe in the public schools notwithstanding the fact that religion in a specific way is not to any considerable extent taught there. We say if the church and the home cannot supplement the work of the school, and care for the religious life of the child, it would have poor care indeed if the public schools were to do it all.

I do not see why the argument will not hold good when we come to the university. All preparatory work is done under home influence.

Young men and women who have graduated at a high school are fixed in habits and character, and even if they are not they do not go beyond possible church and religious influence. Why should not the church follow them where they go to get this special culture if it is not satisfied with their religious environment? The church has its own schools, and

it says, "Come here and we will look after you, go elsewhere and you can take care of yourselves."

Now, I should like to know if this is the reasonable or Christian way of doing things. Here are nearly fifteen hundred young men and women away from home, many of them from Christian families. They are among the brightest young men and women of the state. They are to go out and occupy places of responsibility and honor in the future. They will be lawyers and doctors and judges and members of congress. They will occupy places of prominence in all the professions. They will go out with the power for good or evil many times increased. And yet while the churches of the state are saying, "This is the critical period of their lives, and nothing is so important as that proper religious influences should be thrown around young men and women during their college days"—they are not doing one thing for these young people, they are not contributing one thing to the religious life of the university. It is all left to what the local churches may do. There is not enough interest in the whole state to provide funds for the erection of a building for the Christian Association of the university.

Now, all this is the poorest kind of policy on the part of the churches. There is probably not a denomination that has not more of its own young people in this institution than in its own church schools and yet it is doing practically nothing for them. Any church that really has a grasp of the situation and is looking out only for its own denominational interests should have its eye on every young person in any school no matter where, for nothing means so much for denominational success in the future as to look after the boys and girls of to-day who are to be prominent a little later.

But what can the churches do? They cannot hope to come here to Madison and have an organic connection with the university, and it is not necessary. It is not necessary that the church should have the selection of the president's cabinet in order that the government may be religious. The church

can stand close to the state and project its life into it. It can stand close to the university and make itself felt there as no where else. Such sympathy will not be resented but is most earnestly desired on the part of those who have the care of the institution. Now, why should not the religious interests of this state plant themselves in some permanent form about this university?

It has been suggested that each denomination should build dormitories. This would furnish a home which could be made a religious center. In every dormitory there should be one or more teachers who should take intellectual rank with the best in the university and who should have charge of certain branches specifically religious, not covered by the university course. Arrangements could be made by which these studies could be substituted for others in the regular course, if desired. Lectureships could be established and the most eminent men of the land would contribute their services along lines not now covered by the regular courses. Such an equipment would not cost each denomination more than \$250,000.

And can anybody question the profound effect of such a movement on the religious life of the university, or the valuable reflex influence that would be felt in the church itself?

This movement has already been tried with eminent success. Prof. Ely in his paper on the subject refers to the University of Toronto, Canada. When the Church of England was disestablished the college was secularized. But the religious influence was not removed. Various church schools were immediately federated with it. The Methodist, Presbyterian and Catholic churches and the Church of England all planted themselves about the University, and while they look after the religious life of their own students they have at the same time the benefit of the whole equipment of the university. The plan gives constantly increasing success.

Another illustration is found in Mansfield College, Oxford. For generations Oxford had been the center of the most intense high churchism and conservatism. Perhaps for that

very reason it was selected as the seat of the new college. Ecclesiastically the war was carried into the heart of a hostile country. There were many who predicted disaster. A plan was devised for the removal of Spring Hill College to University City. A large fund was raised; Dr. Fairbairn was chosen principal, and now within ten years from the breaking of the ground the movement has reached a splendid success. The college erected one of the most beautiful buildings at Oxford. It corresponds to a theological seminary with us and is exclusively for the education of the ministry. Dr. Fairbairn is a man of great ability. It has been said that he illustrates as no other Matthew Arnold's classic phrase "sweetness and light" and that his intellect is as keen as a Damascus blade. The pulpit of Mansfield College is now regarded as the most influential at Oxford.

And yet every student who goes there has the inspiration of the intellectual life of the whole university. There can be no better place for a theological school than by the side of a great state university. That such institutions should be planted in cities and put up buildings on costly ground has little justification. The intellectual stimulus of the university would be the best possible stimulus that a student of theology could have while fitting for his work. It would make him broad and tolerant, and at the same time would make it possible for all the religious influence of such a school to be felt in the university.

It is sometimes said that the church must give its whole attention to its own schools, or it will fail to have enough young men trained for the work of the ministry, that state universities furnish a very small number of young men for such work. The only wonder is that they furnish any. The church ignores the state schools, leaves them to take care of themselves, and then complains because they do not turn out more candidates for the ministry. If the church will make itself felt in the university it will find no lack of men to do its work, and men of the best mental temper and equip-

ment. And here is just the line on which a wise teacher in such an institution as has been suggested could do his most effective work in helping bright young men to make a choice of a calling.

There is certainly no disposition on the part of those who believe in state universities to ask well endowed church schools to disband. We bid them God-speed in their noble work. But the poor, struggling, poverty-stricken colleges that have no outlook, that must continue to beg as long as they live, and that can never hope to do anything but inferior work, had better seriously consider the proposition, whether they might not do more good either to become well equipped preparatory schools, or take their small endowment and come to the state university and look after the great number of their own young people who now have so little religious attention.

There are girls' schools caring for thirty or forty pupils that might take their present endowment and in connection with the university furnish a home for two hundred young women, where they could have the best of religious supervision, and at the same time all the intellectual training that may come from the state's investment of seven millions of dollars.

THE STATE UNIVERSITY HAS COME TO STAY.

To ignore what the state has done and is doing, and go on making appeals to build up unnecessary denominational schools when the same money invested elsewhere would do ten times the good, is a squandering of God's money for which some time an account will have to be rendered. It is a much more worthy undertaking to determine that the millions invested by the state in education shall result only in the noblest Christian citizenship, than to turn away from the state, and leave it to take care of itself.

The feeling of the church that she cannot make herself felt religiously at a great university center is a kind of infidelity for which there is no excuse. The church can influence a

political party without electing delegates to its conventions at a prayer meeting. It can influence business and christianize the industrial system without keeping shop, and without having organic connection it may exercise a broadening religious influence on every state university.

I do not think there is a place in the world to-day, and you may search all mission fields, and all philanthropic enterprises, where a million dollars from the principal denominations combined, could be made to produce such large results for the future of the state or could be of such lasting benefit to the church, as an investment of this kind about our own university. This is a matter when once it shall be properly presented that will commend itself to business men, to men of means who have the ability to do great things, and desire nothing so much as the coming of God's kingdom.